

ISANGQA

Welcome to *Isangqa* – The Circle

NEWSLETTER

The Eugenia Nothemba Gxowa Foundation

Simphiwe Nombewu

Eugenia Nothemba Gxowa Foundation Additional Board Member

WELCOME TO ISANGQA - THE CIRCLE 7TH ISSUE

This issue of *Isangqa* – 'The Circle' is coming out after many South Africans have taken a break to enjoy our beautiful weather and reunite with family, and Christians remembered the birth of Jesus Christ.

This newsletter contains findings from an important pilot study on gender-based violence against women (GBVAW) that was conducted in collaboration with the GBV Prevention Unit at the University of Fort Hare in 2024. The survey comes at a time when the country has just been exposed to the horrific nature and extent of GBVAW at one of South Africa's universities.

The Eugenia Nothemba Gxowa Foundation is grateful to Fort Hare for having the courage to look deeper into the underlying causes of GBVAW, which, as we all know affects all universities. The report is phase one of our partnership with the university, where we explore possible roles for men in senior positions within the institution to help curb GBVAW. Dr Bellita Banda Chitsamatanga gives the reader a glimpse of the findings of the report, which are of great concern.

We are grateful to our funding partner, the Lotteries Commission, for enabling the Foundation to undertake this piece of work.

Also covered in this edition is some of the work being undertaken towards the establishment of the Entangeni Adolescent Girls Movement and in another article, one of our board members, Ms Nosiseko Mditshwa from Mbizana, shares her experiences of child marriages.

We welcome Anna Weekes into our midst as an additional board member and thank our supporters, the Lotteries Commission and GBVF Response for their continued support.

Welcome to the 7th issue of *Isangqa*!

Simphiwe Nombewu
Board Member



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FINDINGS OF PILOT STUDY ON GBVAW AT FORT HARE UNIVERSITY

By Dr Bellita Banda Chitsamatanga

DSI-NRF Interim SARCHI Chair in Sexualities, Genders and Queer Studies, at the University of Fort Hare

The pilot phase of the Eugenia Nothemba Gxowa Foundation's (ENGf) National Campaign on 'Collaborating with men holding senior leadership positions at South Africa's tertiary institutions to Combat Gender-Based Violence Against Women (GBVAW)' has been completed. The campaign is a project premised on one of ENGf's programmes, 'Collaborating with men and boys to curb GBVAW/G'. This phase involved assessing the state of GBVAW at the University of Fort Hare (UFH) between April and August 2024. Dr Bellita Banda Chitsamatanga, DSI-NRF Interim SARCHI Chair in Sexualities, Genders and Queer Studies at UFH reports on the findings

The primary objective of the overall programme is to encourage and support men in leadership positions to actively and visibly advocate for the prevention of gender-based violence against women. It is an initiative of the Eugenia Nothemba Gxowa Foundation, which is modelled on the UN Women Global Solidarity Campaign, 'HeForShe'.

The intention of phase one of the project was to gauge the prevalence of GBVAW at Fort Hare – to assess the institutional responses, to analyse cultural norms associated with the problem and to look at the role of men in preventing this form of violence.

The University of Fort Hare has made an effort to create a secure and welcoming atmosphere for a diversity of women. In fact, shortly before the pilot study began, Fort Hare established a Gender-Based Violence and Prevention Unit. But, as the findings of the pilot study indicate, this does not mean that the problem

is anywhere near to being solved.

Let me first describe the physical and socio-cultural setting. At present, the university boasts 19 600 students spread throughout its three campuses, with the majority being female. Fort Hare is in the Eastern Cape and its main campus is in the rural town of Alice with other campuses in Bhisho and East London. While Fort Hare has long been known as a hub for African intellectual thinking and Black liberation, the institution remains largely patriarchal and heterosexist. For female students in particular, the close relationship between Afrocentrism and patriarchy has tangible consequences. Most Fort Hare students hail from conservative and traditional backgrounds where heterosexuality is the norm, with many students and faculty members adhering to the traditional Christian, cultural and religious customs of the rural areas that surround the campus.

The university – supported by the Gender-Based Violence and Prevention Unit and auxiliary units, such as the Student Affairs unit, the SARCHI Chair in Sexualities, Genders and Queer Studies and some external stakeholders – has taken active steps to raise awareness about the prevalence of GBV among students and staff. These steps include the Colour the World campaign, the Pride March, Queer Indaba Day, the Women's Indaba and the Men's Indaba. However, dismantling the deeply ingrained patriarchal beliefs that underlie GBV and femicide at the university remains a major challenge.

Pilot study findings

The pilot phase evaluated gender-based violence at Fort Hare and



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence



encouraged and supported men in leadership roles to openly and actively combat this issue.

Those who participated in the study were undergraduate and post-graduate students representing a wide range of backgrounds. The sample represented a broad spectrum of perspectives that did not adhere to strict or binary conceptions of gender or sexual orientation. The researchers were all post-graduate students from the university with backgrounds in data collection, activism and advocacy against GBV and femicide. They included students from marginalised communities like LGBTQ+ and students with disabilities. The researchers were coached in research ethics, focus-group facilitation and how to handle sensitive topics like GBVAW.

The results indicate that, despite the university's efforts to fight the scourge, GBVAW is rampant on the university's campuses. A key finding is that violence, including physical assault and sexual harassment, has become normalised, especially in relation to female students. Furthermore, heteronormative cultures continue to be fostered and produced by heterosexist environments at the university.

Many students voiced their dissatisfaction with the absence of peer assistance in cases of GBVAW, highlighting bystander inactivity as common. Intimate partner violence is frequent and victim blaming remains a topical issue. Without doubt, cultural and societal standards play a significant role in normalising GBVAW, since they govern how individuals should react to and interpret this kind of violence. Within relationships, aggressive practices, such as manipulating or harassing female classmates, are seen as normal and are even expected, especially among male students.

Widespread victim blaming is a major obstacle to tackling GBVAW. Many of those subjected to violence, especially female students, are unjustifiably accused of being complicit in the violence, with GBVAW being linked to dress

code or behaviour. Blaming those subjected to abuse serves to normalise violent behaviour and perpetuate the silence around reporting GBVAW. Some said that while male students are aware that violence is happening on campus, due to fear, societal pressures and a lack of knowledge they do nothing to stop it or report it. Consequently, GBVAW goes unpunished, leading to a climate of silence.

Intimate relationship maltreatment, especially in residential settings, is a common thread in the findings. Lack of supervision makes residences hot spots for interpersonal violence. In addition, female students in cohabitation situations reported feeling especially exposed to psychological, emotional and physical abuse.

Within relationships, aggressive practices, such as manipulating or harassing female classmates, are seen as normal and are even expected, especially among male students.

Misuse of power by those in authoritative positions, especially lecturers and SRC members, is a recurring issue. Teaching staff were found to be complicit in numerous cases of sexual harassment, coercion and abuse of power – with tactics described as 'sexually transmitted marks', 'thigh for marks' and 'sex for marks'. Students voiced concern that lecturing staff frequently exploit their authority by promising academic benefits in return for sexual favours. One of the study's main conclusions is that power dynamics are crucial in maintaining GBVAW. Some perpetrators of GBVAW were identified as members of the SRC who occupy influential roles within the student community.

Another notable finding is that confidence in the university's reaction systems is low. Students said that more needs to be done by Campus Control, the SCU and the GBV Unit, as many crimes go unsolved leading to a vicious cycle of GBVAW.

In public places like campuses and bars, sexual harassment and other types of open violence are commonplace, whereas intimate partner violence is more likely to happen in private settings, such as residences. This geographical aspect of GBVAW emphasises the difficulty of tackling violence on campus, since varying strategies are needed.

A recurring narrative indicates that pervasive anxiety and fear of being harassed or assaulted is having a negative effect on the mental health of female students and financial vulnerability is a major factor contributing to GBVAW for them. The vulnerable financial position of many students has increased due to the socioeconomic climate and the residual impacts of the 'Fees Must Fall' movement. This has opened opportunities for exploitation with financially precarious female students susceptible to abuse.

Another significant contributor to GBVAW is substance misuse, with alcohol consumption being a particularly important influence. Sexual harassment, assault and intimate partner violence are more likely to occur at taverns and discos where alcohol is served. When male students take advantage of the drunken condition of their female classmates, alcohol acts as a catalyst for aggressive activity and a mask for predatory behaviour. The students' narratives point to intense confrontations, including physical fights, sexual assaults and verbal abuse, where alcohol is involved.

Comment on findings and some recommendations

These emerging findings offer each unit, faculty or department, from policy makers in the institution to policy implementers, an opportunity to understand, to some extent, the experiences and realities of what is happening in the lives of students at the University of Fort Hare.

Thanks to these findings, the university now has the opportunity to act on the recommendations proffered. Most importantly, students should be applauded for reporting GBVAW cases. This

will have a positive outcome for the university : it will highlight the ongoing efforts to 'make GBV your business'; it will bolster the unwavering stance of zero tolerance of GBV; and it will promote the establishment and use of safe spaces for those subjected to GBV. Giving voice to students as they narrate their experiences will influence students' sense of belonging and their understanding and awareness of GBVAW. It will increase awareness of the manifestations and consequences of GBVAW and its implications in university spaces.

Having engaged with the field researchers throughout the whole data collection phase, it is no surprise that the findings from this research have confirmed existing notions about the gaps in universities in relation to GBVAW and LGBTIQ+ knowledge. It is hoped that the findings will be a catalyst for the promotion of diversity and inclusion at Fort Hare.

It is not enough to say that the university takes a zero tolerance stance to GBVAW when issues of inclusion and diversity remain superficial. The question is not about *being*, rather it is about *doing*. How will the university make room for female students to exist and thrive? In what ways has the heterosexual and heteronormative culture and environment been reconfigured to undo forms of regulation and compulsory heterosexual existence? These are critical and to some extent uncomfortable questions that we need to find answers to if the 'HeforShe' campaign is to bear fruit. These are also questions that other universities in South Africa must engage with as the issue of GBVAW continues to ravage the majority of our teaching and learning institutions.

Through this research, I hope that all departments, faculties and units at Fort Hare, particularly its leadership, will do the necessary GBVAW work, taking the cue from the face of the campaign and deliberately include all university stakeholders in promoting activism and advocacy against GBVAW. Lastly, this research, which is based on context and

positionality, places Fort Hare at the forefront in ensuring that the 'HeforShe' campaign becomes an institutionally based site of best practice to fight GBVAW.

This is a call for deliberate and intentional inclusion of males who are in leadership positions to help create an environment whereby all those who bring different experiences, values and aspirations are included in an environment that will make them thrive. ♀

With grateful thank to the National Lotteries commission for their support for this of this research.



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REPORT ON PARTICIPATION IN THE BEIJING+30 AFRICA YOUTH AND CSO CONSULTATIONS: A PATHWAY TO ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY

Prepared by Ms Anita Kube

Secretary to the Board of the Eugenia Nothemba Gxowa Foundation



The Beijing+30 Africa Youth and Civil Society Organisation's Consultations, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at the end of October 2024, provided a powerful forum for Africa's youth and civil society to celebrate progress and assess the work still required for gender equality. This pivotal event was organised by the African Union, in partnership with FEMNET (the African Women's Development and Communication Network), the United Nations and other key stakeholders.

With over 300 young leaders, civil society representatives and advocates from across Africa, the consultations provided an essential space to evaluate the progress made, discuss challenges that remain and set future priorities to advance gender equality. Below are the objectives of the consultations, the themes and structure of the conference, insights from Africa's youth, demands expressed by African women and girls and the significance of this conference on the path to the 69th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69) in March 2025.

Aims and objectives of the consultation

The primary aim of the conference was to assess the continent's progress on gender equality since the Beijing Declaration in 1995 and to strategise future actions.

Key objectives included:

- *Assessing Regional Progress:* Reviewing Africa's achievements and identifying

where significant challenges remain.

- *Amplifying Youth Voices:* Providing a platform for young people, especially young women, to influence policies that impact their lives and futures.
- *Reaffirming Commitments:* Encouraging African nations to recommit to the goals of the Beijing Platform while recognising new challenges and opportunities.
- *Setting Policy Priorities:* Gathering insights from youth and CSOs to shape a regional report for the 69th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69) taking place at the UN Headquarters in New York from March 10-21, 2025. This session will bring together representatives from Member States, UN entities and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) as well as accredited NGOs globally.
- *Raising Awareness of Gender Equality Milestones:* Promoting critical reflection on the past three decades of progress to inspire renewed action.

Conference proceedings

The two-day consultations were designed to foster meaningful participation among youth leaders, activists and policymakers.

Day 1 focused on *Youth Consultation and Regional Analysis*. The opening session celebrated the

historical importance of the Beijing Declaration and honoured African pioneers of gender equality. Keynote speaker, Dr Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, UN Women Deputy Executive Director for Normative Support, emphasised the role of intergenerational dialogue in sustaining the Beijing platform's vision.

Panel discussions addressed gender-sensitive budgeting, governance and youth challenges in education and reproductive health. Participants engaged in workshops exploring the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action, including violence against women, women's economic empowerment and healthcare access; each considered through an African youth perspective.

Day 2 focused on *Policy Advocacy and Strategy Development*, bringing in African ministers and technical experts. The draft AU Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls was reviewed and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) was evaluated. Youth representatives presented demands and recommendations to policymakers, advocating youth inclusion in decision-making and increased support for CSOs. Youth leaders summarised key findings and priorities that would help shape Africa's position at the upcoming CSW69 session.

Progress achieved

- **Increased Access to Education:** Targeted policies have enabled more young women to complete secondary and higher education, signaling a significant accomplishment in gender equality.
- **Legal Reforms:** Numerous African countries have enacted laws protecting women's rights, including legislation against gender-based violence and policies aimed at women's economic empowerment.
- **Visibility in Leadership:** There is an encouraging trend of women assuming leadership roles across political, economic and social sectors, gradually advancing inclusivity and representation.

Persistent challenges

- **Gender-Based Violence (GBV):** Despite policy improvements, GBV remains widespread, with high rates of domestic violence, harassment and femicide reported across the continent.
- **Economic Disparities:** Economic inequalities continue to limit opportunities for young women, with access to resources, wage gaps and barriers to entrepreneurship remaining significant issues.
- **Digital Divide:** The gender gap in technology access hampers young women's ability to benefit from digital resources, impacting education and employment.
- **Barriers to Reproductive Health Services:** Access to reproductive health services remains inconsistent, with young women in rural and underserved areas facing the greatest challenges.

Demands of African women and girls for advancing gender equality

Throughout the consultations, African women and girls articulated

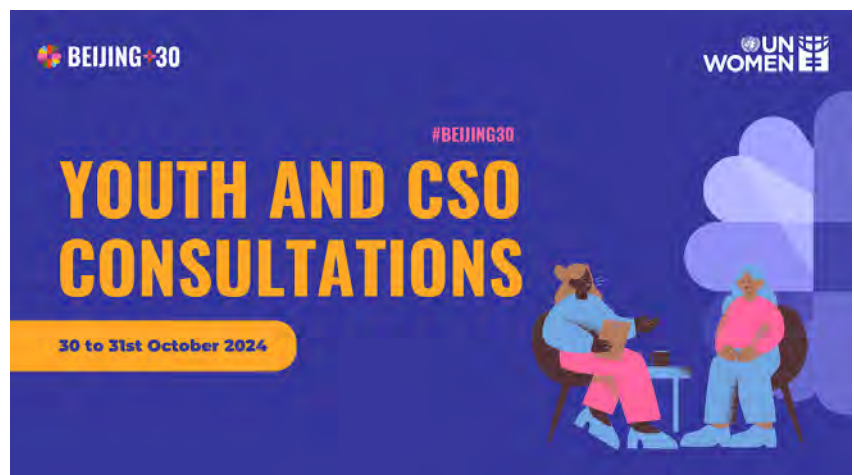
critical demands to shape a more equitable future:

- **Gender-Sensitive Budgeting:** Youth participants called on governments to prioritise gender-responsive budgeting and allocate resources specifically for gender equality programmes, with thorough monitoring of their impact.
- **Youth Inclusion in Decision-Making:** Young leaders emphasised the importance of meaningful representation in policymaking to ensure that policies address their needs and aspirations.
- **Strengthened Governance and Accountability:** Participants advocated for improved governance, accountability and transparency in managing gender equality funds and initiatives.
- **Support for CSOs:** Recognising CSOs as essential advocates, participants called for greater support and protection of these organisations.
- **Legislative Action to Combat GBV:** African youth demanded the rigorous enforcement of laws to end GBV and the implementation of the draft AU Convention on Ending Violence against Women and Girls.

The consultations are part of a broader roadmap for advancing gender equality in Africa, with the following key upcoming milestones:

- **Pre-CSW69 Consultations:** Findings from Addis Ababa will shape Africa's contribution to the upcoming 69th session of the CSW where a global review of the Beijing Declaration will be undertaken, drawing representatives from Member States, UN entities and ECOSOC-accredited NGOs worldwide.
- **Draft AU Convention on Ending Violence against Women and Girls:** The proposed legislation signifies a critical step toward eliminating GBV across AU member states.
- **Strengthening the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa:** Discussions during the consultations highlighted the need for more effective mechanisms to monitor SDGEA implementation, ensuring that African nations honour their commitments.
- **Youth Advocacy and Intergenerational Dialogue:** By fostering collaboration between young activists and experienced advocates, the consultations encouraged a culture of intergenerational solidarity that will sustain the Beijing Declaration's vision for years to come.

Amplifying the voices of young African women and fostering cross-generational solidarity, the consultations laid a solid foundation for Africa's ongoing commitment to gender equality. ♀



REFLECTING ON FORCED CHILD MARRIAGE IN THE MBIZANA VICINITY

Ms Nosiseko Mditshwa

ENGf Board member and resident of the Mbizana area

The forced marriage of children continues to cast a dark shadow over the lives of countless young girls. This article, written by ENGf Board member, Nosiseko Mditshwa, focuses on the effects of child marriage in the Mbizana area, which is where the writer is from. It is based on her own observations and on what people say in hushed tones about the practice, and on interviews with two child brides who were abducted at the ages 14 and 15.

Called “child, early, forced marriage and union” (CEFMU), the practice of marrying off underage girls is rooted in cultural norms and is generally associated with economic hardship. Early marriage in the Mpondo tradition does not require the informed consent of the bride and is carried out against the will of the selected girl. It generally means the end of the girl’s formal education and exposes her to exploitation and the likelihood of lifelong trauma and disappointment.

In the Mbizana area it is evident that children who have been forced into marriage carry emotional and physical scars. Abduction and the forced administration of a concoction known as a “love potion” is part of the practice. According to AmaMpondo, when a girl is forced to drink a love potion it is called “kukuphosa”. One of the

girls subjected to early marriage was a 15-year-old who recalls being abducted while walking home from the forest after fetching wood:

“[The] Men who snatched me, made me to drink a bottle of herbal mixture (umthi) which made my body to be numb and my mind blank so I didn’t even know where we were going, and even when we arrived at the home of my so-called husband, [he] gave me an additional dose.”

This herbal remedy is mixed with other substances, such as the soot from a kitchen roof pole and the dirty bathing water of certain strategic family members, like the “inspired husband”. Those administering the mixture overpower and force the girl to drink it – they claim that the mixture is safe. Its purpose is to ensure that the captured girl does not escape, and it is their responsibility to convince, some would say brainwash, the girl that she is well loved by the man whom she is being forced to marry and his entire family. “The men who snatched me claimed it was per the custom of *ukuthwala*, where girls are ‘taken’ to become wives.” In this case, the unfounded love of the so-called husband turned to domestic violence with the 15-year-old reporting:

“My marital home became my real home, as I could not stand my home where I was born and raised. My parents would



tell me that my husband’s home was my only home and that I should obey and love my husband no matter what.”

Another case is that of a 14-year-old who was married off to a man nearly three times her age in exchange for cattle and money. Her parents died when she was little, so she grew up living with her aunt. Poverty-stricken, her family believed it was the best way to secure the family’s future. “I was treated like property,” she said.

“I wanted to run away, but where could I go? I had nowhere to turn. I knew that when I went home, they wouldn’t welcome me, and I was scared of being called ‘umabuya ekwendeni’. I was scared that my aunt would mistreat me and accuse me of killing my husband. I didn’t have the chance to go to school because I was taking care of the family and my aunt said that a girl should be prepared for marriage at an early age so there was no need for me to go to school. I was uneducated and had nothing to fall back on.”

The role of perpetrators

Perpetrators of child, early, forced marriage and union are often older men, some of whom hold influential positions in the community. They use the following strategies to trap victims:

- **Abduction:** Girls are taken forcibly from their homes or schools, leaving them disoriented and unable to seek help.
- **Family complicity:** Perpetrators often negotiate with families, offering money, livestock or other material goods in exchange for the child bride.
- **Cultural justification:** By framing the act as adherence to tradition, perpetrators shield themselves from scrutiny and legal consequences.
- **Social pressure:** Families and communities sometimes pressure girls to comply, emphasising the supposed benefits of marriage and the shame of refusing.

Why survivors cannot escape

- **Lack of resources:** Many survivors are financially dependent on their families or spouses and have no means to support themselves.
- **Isolation:** Victims are often cut off from friends and support networks, making it difficult to seek help.
- **The power of traditional herbs (umuthi):** Victims cannot escape because the perpetrators use

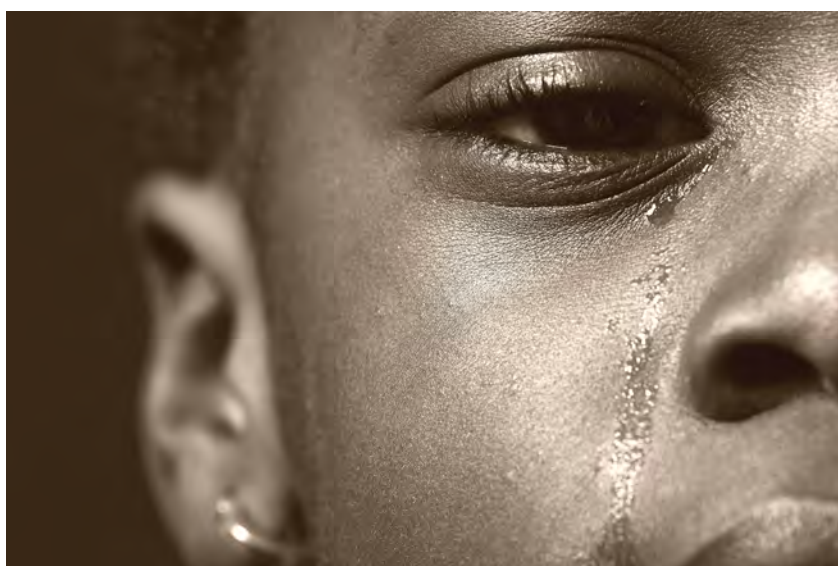
umuthi on them, as explained above. They usually go and see a traditional healer (isangoma) and seek *umuthi wokwenda*; then they will be given *ibhodlela* and some containing *izizwe*, so that whenever the girl goes home, she will cry and scream and want to go back to her husband's homestead.

- **Fear of retaliation:** The threat of violence or ostracisation from their communities deters many girls from attempting to leave.
- **Fear of stigma:** Victims may fear being stigmatised and called names like *umabuya ekwendeni*, so they fear returning home.

Existing interventions and their performance

Despite laws, such as the Children's Act, which sets the minimum marriage age at 18, and the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, which criminalises CEFMU, enforcement remains a challenge. Local police often lack resources or training to handle such cases, and traditional leaders may prioritise customary law over national legislation.

Non-governmental organisations and social development offices have stepped in where the State has fallen short, offering counseling, legal aid and safe spaces for survivors. However, these efforts are often underfunded and face resistance from communities that view them as undermining cultural traditions. ♀



Recommendations for the Eugenia Nothemba Gxowa Foundation

1. Community engagement and education

- Partner with traditional leaders to raise awareness about the harmful effects of child marriage and promote alternative rites of passage that uphold cultural identity without violating children's rights.
- Conduct workshops for families, emphasising the importance of education and the long-term benefits of keeping girls in school.

2. Strengthening legal support

- Advocate for better enforcement of existing laws and provide training for police and community leaders to recognise and respond to cases of forced marriage.
- Offer free legal aid to victims and their families, ensuring they understand their rights and have access to justice.

3. Empowering girls

- Establish mentorship programmes and scholarships to keep girls in school and provide them with role models who can inspire them to pursue their dreams.
- Take Entangeni Adolescent Girls Movement to emaMpondweni.

4. Advocacy and monitoring

- Collaborate with government agencies and other NGOs to monitor cases of child marriage and hold perpetrators accountable.
- Develop an anonymous reporting system to encourage victims and witnesses to come forward.

ENTANGENI ADOLESCENT GIRLS MOVEMENT: IT IS UP AND RUNNING, GRATEFUL TO THE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE RESPONSE FUND (GBVF)

Nomkhitha Gysman
Founding chairperson of the ENGF and EAGM Project Manager



Finally, the Eugenia Nothemba Gxowa Foundation (ENGf) has managed to clinch a sustainable partnership with the Gender-based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) Response Fund to provide financial support to one of our strategic programmes, the Entangeni Adolescent Girls Movement (EAGM). This partnership will provide much needed resources over a period of 2 years.

Initially, the EAGM was seen as a strategy to contribute to curbing, child, early, and forced, marriage and unions (CEFMU) in the Eastern Cape. However, due to pressing needs in Makhanda, e.g. the high rate of gender-based violence against girls including adolescent pregnancy, we decided to prioritise the Makana Local Municipality. In her contribution to the 6th Edition of the Isangqa Newsletter, Pinkie Sobahle describes the concept of *entangeni* as the provision of a space for adolescent girls to share their experiences and fears, specifically of their sexual and reproductive health and rights. It encourages them to find solutions, with the hope that they could ultimately be used to influence the laws and policies of the country. *Entangeni*, is a locative from a the noun *Intanga*, a Xhosa girls' hut, solely for girls - boys would enter on invitation only, elders were not allowed at all. The same principles would be adhered to in the ENGf

EAGM context - however, adults would be allowed to come in for provision of advice and information.

The overall purpose of the project supported by the GBVF Response Fund is for creating opportunities for adolescent girls to promote self-reliance and bodily autonomy -- thereby helping to break the poverty cycle for them and their families. The contract between ENGf and the GBVF Response Fund requires that the former covers the following activities:

The first 3 months are for formally re-organising, bearing in mind that the first cohort of Entangeni Adolescent Girls met in 2022 during the 16 Days of Activism. We have a target of 50 adolescent girls as a start-up group, e.g. adolescent SRHR needs will be verified. We received an overwhelming support from township primary and secondary schools and, finally we selected 5 girls from each of the following schools:

- NV Cewu
- K Daniels
- Fikizolo
- Makana
- A Mbolekwa
- TEM Mrwetyana
- Ntaba Maria
- S Ntlebi
- S Ntsiko
- DD Siwisa
- CM Vellem

Head teachers at the above schools, reflecting on the issues of SRHR confronting adolescent girls, their parents and schools, welcomed the intervention and were supportive of the approach which requires that parents or guardians sign consent forms for each girl's participation, provision of transport when girls go to *Entangeni*, which is temporarily at TEM Mrwetyana school hall, on identified Saturdays and provision of snacks on those Saturdays.

The 50 girls are to participate as informants to establish what the adolescent girls from Makhanda's SRHR issues are, and whether they are addressed by those mandated to do so, what else should be done e.g. health practitioners, police officers, councilors, social workers, teachers and head teachers, school governing boards, what steps to take should they fail to do so. An SRHR feminist expert has been recruited to develop and produce a data collection toolkit which will be used by apost graduate unemployed young (18-35 year old) female social science and or sexuality studies or psychology students who will be recruited as data collectors.

The above data collectors will only be recruited during Phase 2 of the project (December 2024-June 2025). A SRHR expert has already been recruited, however she will only start working between

December and February 2025 and produce the required materials.

It should be noted that the phase that the ENGF is busy with, is anchored on Pillar 6 (Research and information systems) of the GBVF National Strategic Plan.

The next phases of the project, Phase 3 and 4, data collection, analysis, report writing and curating of a drama piece and movement will only kick in, in July 2025-August 2026.

In a nutshell, the first 2 years of the project are for planning and preparation, reaching out to broader adolescent girls, intergenerational dialogues, will only happen during 2026-2028.

The board of the ENGF is grateful for this opportunity afforded by GBVF Response Fund, to finally kick off the project in Makhanda. ♀

Below, photos of the ENG Foundation's Entangeni Adolescent Girls Movement Planning meeting held in October 2024



MEET NEW BOARD MEMBER:

Ms Anna Weekes-Majavu



A new addition to the ENGF Board, Anna Weekes-Majavu. She has been a journalist, trade unionist and media activist since the early 1990s. She has worked as a senior journalist at Sowetan newspaper, New Frame, and as an editor at Pacific Media Watch in New Zealand.

Anna holds a master's degree in philosophy (Journalism) and her PhD is currently under examination. She has also lectured in the Journalism and Media Studies Department at Rhodes University and facilitates media training workshops for casual workers and community healthcare workers. She is on the board of the African Connection Women's Football Club, the only women's football team in Makhanda. ♀

PEACE & GOODWILL

Warm wishes for a season of
growth and connection.

Peace and joy to you and all
you hold dear.



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